

# *Richard III*

Act II, sc. 1 (line 96 - intercut)

## JOHN OF GAUNT

Now He that made me knows I see thee ill;  
Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.  
Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land  
Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;  
And thou, too careless patient as thou art,  
Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure  
Of those physicians that first wounded thee:  
A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown,  
Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;  
And yet, incaged in so small a verge,  
The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.  
O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye  
Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,  
From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,  
Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,  
Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.  
Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,  
It were a shame to let this land by lease;  
But for thy world enjoying but this land,  
Is it not more than shame to shame it so?

Landlord of England art thou now, not king:

Thy state of law is bonds slave to the law; And thou--

***KING RICHARD II***

*A lunatic lean-witted fool,  
Presuming on an ague's privilege,  
Darest with thy frozen admonition  
Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood  
With fury from his native residence.  
Now, by my seat's right royal majesty,  
Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,  
This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head  
Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.*

**JOHN OF GAUNT**

O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,

For that I was his father Edward's son;

That blood already, like the pelican,

Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused:

My brother Gloucester, plain well-meaning soul,

Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!

May be a precedent and witness good

That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood:

Join with the present sickness that I have;

And thy unkindness be like crooked age,

To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.

Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!

These words hereafter thy tormentors be!

Convey me to my bed, then to my grave:

Love they to live that love and honour have.